



Crocus & creeping speedwell- photo by Arden Miller

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**Let the Growing Begin!**

We are excited to begin another season of growing and giving at East Snyder Community Garden.

So far forty-five garden plots have been assigned. As we welcome 4 new gardeners and over 40 returning members, we invite others to join us. It's not too late. Get your [plot application here](#).



**NEWSLETTER SURVEY**

Your opinion matters! Let us know what you think about our newsletter by taking a 3-minute survey. [Complete the survey](#).



Please consider using your talents to help East Snyder Community Garden serve our community. If you or your organization would like to learn more about volunteering, [click here](#).

## Garden News

### Notes from the Garden Manager, Roy Swazey

Spring and the planting season are upon us with more light, higher temperatures, and optimism. We will meet some new gardeners and re-meet some old gardeners.

As you root about in your plots, you may encounter rocks. Piles of rocks both small and large are a danger to mowers after they have become concealed by weeds. Collect rocks in buckets that have been drilled to drain water. Even currently uncut areas may be mowed in the future.

I will be bringing horse stable sweepings and dumping them at various spots in the garden. If you want some, let me know. I can drop it closer to where you want to use it.

Please take the garbage you generate home with you. Otherwise, it is likely going home with me.



### Board Notes

We've added this new section to highlight actions of the garden board. Recent actions include:

#### 2024 Garden Goals

- <sup>1</sup>Increase gardener volunteer participation by following up on volunteer surveys
- <sup>2</sup> Increase educational programming by offering two new programs this season.

#### [Plot assignment procedure](#)

#### [Complaint policy and procedure](#)

All active members of ESCG are welcome to attend board meetings. The next board meeting is  
**Wednesday, May 15th, 6:30PM**  
**Keystone Room, Rudy Gelnett Memorial Library**

Those who are unable to meet in person may [request a Zoom link](#).



We are proud to be a part of the [USDA People's Garden](#) network. The People's Garden community connects gardens across the country that produce local food, practice, sustainability, and brings people together in their community. The USDA People's Garden website is a great resource for gardeners.

### Educational Opportunities

#### Mosquito Talk - May 8, 6-8PM

Learn more about mosquito life cycles, viruses, breeding habitat, and how to protect yourself in the garden this season! Presented by Mosquito Borne Disease Control Program, Northumberland County Conservation District. ([See details on page 6.](#))

#### Annual Firefly Walk - July 18

Mark your calendars now! Dr. Sarah Lower, Assistant Professor of Biology at Bucknell, and her students will be back at the garden to amaze us with facts about the fascinating firefly! Event and registration details will be emailed to our [subscribers](#) closer to the event.



## Seed Exchange 2024

By Arden Miller



photo by Noemi Beachy

The annual seed exchange was held on February 17th. Snow overnight did not keep gardeners away as the groundhog had reported that spring was coming early this year. Everyone is anxious to get to work in their gardens! Members of the Susquehanna Valley Club joined us with seeds to give away. In addition to the seeds that attendees brought to share, seeds were donated by Johnny's Selected Seeds, Seed Savers Exchange, Sow True Seed, Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds, Bentley Seeds, Cole's Hardware, Redwood seeds, and BrightFarms. In the week leading up to the event, children visiting the library could participate in a Seek and Find and bring their completed paper to the event to exchange for a prize.

The seed exchange was covered by *The Daily Item*. [Click here](#) to read the article.



Seek and Find



It's always good to read the seed packet.



Susquehanna Garden Club

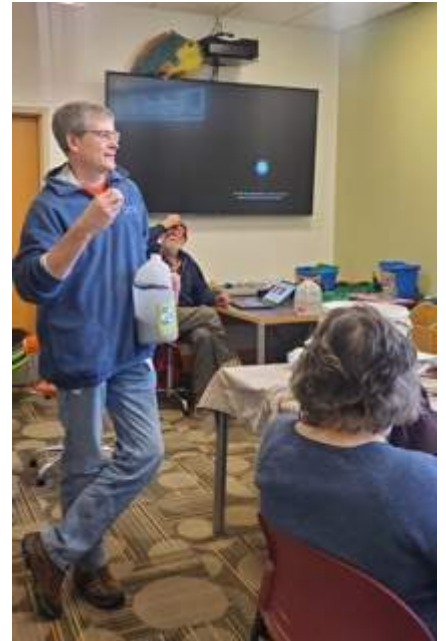
## Winter Sowing Workshop

*Photo story by Noemi Beachy*

The winter sowing workshop held on March 10th at Rudy Gelnett Memorial Library was a great success. Participants of all ages learned about germinating seeds, used a recycled bottle to make a mini greenhouse, and planted frost-tolerant seeds of their choice to take home.



Jackie demonstrates that local seed companies donate seeds that are viable even after their proposed expiration date.



Dan takes a moment to explain cold frames as another option to extend the growing season.



Expired onion seeds still flourish on a damp paper towel inside a plastic baggy.



A community gardener helps her granddaughters place soil into the containers so they can plant the seeds they've chosen.



Great-grandmother learns about winter sowing alongside her granddaughter.



## Eating Cheap in Ireland

By Meghan Cook

*My frugality and vegetarianism morphed into creative new cuisine.*

Last year, I lived gardenless in Ireland for seven months, from January through the end of July. My responsibilities were many: literature classes, teaching swim lessons to Irish primary school students, and rowing for the University of Galway boat club. Far away from my parents, I had to fend for myself. I arrived in the midst of unprecedented inflation in Ireland, with [food prices climbing 14% by May 2023](#). I reserved my euros for plane tickets and trinkets, with little left over for the grocery bill.

Vegetables grown in Irish soil cost less than a euro, so I experimented with leeks, turnips, and cabbage. Combined with quinoa and lentils, these staples lent themselves to nutrient dense and filling meals to fuel long training sessions on the Corrib River. If you're down on your luck and looking for veg-heavy meals, try out this rough-and-tumble dish I experimented with on the other side of the Atlantic!

That I should be so lucky! There are plenty of traditional Irish dishes that I should have brought home from my trip, but I lived nontraditionally. Many of my teammates lived with their family or went home on the weekends. I stuck it out on my own, and I'm glad I did. Anyways, the dish of national pride most notable is a pint of plain and a good conversation. Sláinte!



### Salad Wrap

#### Ingredients:

1 Irish cabbage *	red onion
rice or quinoa	sweet potato
lentils or beans	hummus
broccoli	carrot
tomatoes	corn
taco spice blend	

#### Directions:

1. Prepare your rice or quinoa, lentils, or beans on the stove. Chop your broccoli and sweet potato into small pieces and roast until crispy and tender. Steam your corn, if on cob.
2. Slice and dice your tomatoes and red onion. Cut your corn from the cob. Grate Carrot.
3. Combine rice/quinoa, lentils/beans, broccoli, corn, tomatoes, red onion, carrot, and sweet potato with spices in a large bowl. You may want to add a dash of lime.
4. Separate leaves from the stalk of your Irish Cabbage. Rinse them off and pat them dry with a towel. Using a knife, slice away the tough part of the midrib until only the edible portion remains.
5. Layout foil and parchment paper. Place four leaves alternately on top of one another. Spread some hummus on the inside of the cabbage. Add several generous scoops of your filling. Carefully close the wrap by folding the cabbage leaves in on each other and securing the wrap with parchment paper and foil.
6. Refrigerate and enjoy on a hike in the Burren!

\* This will not work with some kinds of cabbage. The Irish cabbage resembles a pointed cabbage: Its leaves are more flexible and unfurl easily to form the wrap for this salad. If you only have a round cannonball cabbage, consider chopping it up and tossing it together with the mix to create a delicious salad bowl.

Since the outer leaves of the cabbage are the largest, try to distribute them equally among the wraps. The filling is enough for four or five wraps, but if you use the best leaves on the first wrap, your product will get smaller each time.

The tender inner most leaves of the cabbage are perfect to use as scoops for the filling.



*Meghan Cook is a senior at Susquehanna University, studying English Secondary Education with minors in Honors and Philosophy. As a work study student for ESCG from August '19 until the start of the pandemic, she collected seeds and painted signs. She loves cooking with fresh produce and visiting the garden when the zinnias are in bloom.*



## IS YOUR GARDEN A BREEDING GROUND FOR MOSQUITOES?

Join us for a free event to learn more about mosquito life cycles, viruses, breeding habitat, and how to protect yourself in the garden this season!

**MAY 8TH, 2024**  
**6:00-8:00PM**

**East Snyder Community Garden**  
971 University Avenue  
Selinsgrove, PA 17870




Your feedback matters! Please complete this 3-minute newsletter survey!



Photo by Lori Lupolt

## Gardeners- You make a difference!

The fresh produce donated by East Snyder Community Garden gardeners is appreciated by those who are food insecure in our area. ESCG donates produce to several different groups. Gardeners can find the dates for donation and the produce donation details on the calendar in the shed. Dates are also listed on the East Snyder Community Garden website calendar. ESCG gardeners can store produce in the refrigerator at the garden if needed to preserve freshness. Thank you, Arden Miller produce donation coordinator.



## Benefits of Cover Crops

by Arden Miller

Thanks to a great presentation by Bucknell University Farm employees Theresa Dollar, Irene Hu and Jon Hunsberger, we have a better understanding of cover cropping. Benefits of cover crops go beyond improving soil health, adding nutrients, and weed suppression. Cover crops are an important soil carbon sequestration strategy. The roots and shoots of cover crops feed bacteria, fungi, earthworms, and other soil organisms, which increases soil carbon levels over time. Soil water storage may even be improved due to less runoff, greater infiltration, and less evaporation when cover crop residues are utilized. Depending on time of planting, cover crops provide for pollination. Integration of cover crops in your garden can provide habitat, forage resources, overwintering, and reproduction shelters for pollinators, bees, ladybugs and more, or as the presenters said "cover crops promote ecosystem coolness" or "caring for the ecosystem as a whole."

Examples of cover crops are those that are considered "winter kill" such as oats, daikon radish and field peas. Overwinter cover crop examples include rye and crimson clover. Buckwheat is a cover crop that can be planted midsummer to fill space until a fall crop is planted. The blooms on buckwheat feed pollinators. It is recommended that a home gardener chose a small section to trial a cover crop or mixture of seed types. An overwinter crop must be "terminated" before planting the bed the next season, so planning is necessary. *Continued on page 8*



Theresa Dollar talks about cover crops.

*Cover crops continued from page 7*

Seed companies have educational materials about cover crops that can help broaden your knowledge. Another resource recommended is [Northeast Cover Crops](#) which has great information and a guide specific to your planting zone on when each type of cover crops should be planted. [Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education](#) is another good resource that can help guide the home gardener in selecting and planting a cover crop.



Irene Hu and Jon Hunsberger, Bucknell Farm employees

MINI GUIDE

## COVER CROPS

Growing plants for the health of the soil and ecosystem! The food you grow is also a direct result of the soil you grow it in

### Benefits

- Carbon Sequestration
- Adding Nutrients to the soil
- Water Retention
- Weed Prevention
- Ecosystem Coolness (caring about the ecosystem as a whole)
- Providing for pollination

### Examples (there are many more too!)

Winter Kill	Overwinter	Mid-Summer
<p>These can be planted in August until Sep. 30th and will die over the winter.</p>	<p>These can be planted in September/October until Nov. 1st and will grow until terminated at end of May.</p>	<p>Can be planted after early spring planting and before fall crop.</p>

Learn More

- Seed purchasing: Johnny's Seeds, Fedco, & Seedway offer excellent selections
- Check out these resources for more Cover Crop info!

<https://tinyurl.com/rodalecovercrops>
<https://tinyurl.com/covercropsare>
<https://northeastcovercrops.com/faq.htm>

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual "Joy to the Earth" Event

### Saturday April 20

### 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

### East Snyder Community Park.

Food trucks, music, hands on activities for kids,  
 Learn about Susquehanna River waterfowl, backyard composting,  
 alternatives to plastics and fast fashion, and more!  
 Donate your gently used shoes for the Soles4Souls shoe drive.  
 Get a free tree and meet Ms. Frizzle from the Magic School Bus.  
 All this and so much more and, it's FREE.



## Let's talk about okra!

Let's talk about okra - that often misunderstood and underappreciated vegetable that graces our garden beds. While it may not be the first choice for everyone, there are plenty of reasons to embrace this versatile and nutritious crop.



First and foremost, okra is incredibly easy to grow. It thrives in warm climates, making it a perfect addition to our community garden here in East Snyder. With minimal care and attention, okra plants produce abundant yields, rewarding gardeners with a plentiful harvest throughout the growing season. For those looking to maximize their garden's productivity without the hassle of constant maintenance, okra is a reliable choice.

Now, onto the culinary front. Okra is not only nutritious but also highly versatile in the kitchen. It can be prepared in numerous ways, catering to a variety of tastes and preferences.

In addition to its culinary versatility, okra is also incredibly nutritious. It's low in calories but high in fiber, vitamins, and minerals, making it a valuable addition to any diet. Okra is particularly rich in vitamin C, vitamin K, and folate, as well as antioxidants that promote overall health and well-being.

So, fellow gardeners, let's give okra a chance. By growing and incorporating this humble vegetable into our meals, we not only expand our culinary horizons but also reap the rewards of its nutritional benefits. Whether grilled, stir-fried, or pickled, okra has something to offer everyone - let's embrace its potential and savor the goodness it brings to our tables. Here are a few recipe suggestions to inspire you:

**Okra Curry:** A flavorful and aromatic curry that combines okra with spices like cumin, coriander, and turmeric. Serve it over rice or with naan bread for a satisfying meal that's both comforting and nutritious.

**Grilled Okra:** Simply toss whole okra pods with olive oil, salt, and pepper, then grill them until tender and slightly charred. This method enhances okra's natural flavor and adds a delightful smokiness to the dish. Serve as a side or appetizer with a squeeze of lemon juice.

**Okra Stir-Fry:** Stir-frying okra with other seasonal vegetables like bell peppers, onions, and cherry tomatoes creates a colorful and vibrant dish packed with nutrients. Add tofu, chicken, or shrimp for extra protein, and season with soy sauce, ginger, and garlic for a delicious Asian-inspired meal.

**Okra Gumbo:** A classic Southern dish that celebrates the flavors of okra. Combine okra with tomatoes, onions, bell peppers, and spices like paprika and thyme to create a hearty stew that's perfect for chilly evenings. Serve over rice for a satisfying meal that's sure to please.

**Pickled Okra:** For those who enjoy tangy and crunchy snacks, pickled okra is a delightful option. Simply pack okra pods into jars with vinegar, salt, and spices like dill and garlic, then let them pickle for a few days. Enjoy them as a tasty accompaniment to sandwiches, salads, or cheese platters.



### Welcome Back ESCG Family Potluck

Saturday, June 1, 2024

5:00 PM

Hotdogs, buns, and marshmallows will be provided. Gardeners should bring a covered dish to share, chairs or blanket for seating, and place settings. Water will be provided, but feel free to bring non-alcoholic beverages of your choice.

We'll have a campfire for all to enjoy. S'more making strongly encouraged.



Rain date: June 2nd

## Susquehanna Garden Club

by Diane Lengle

Many people hear “Garden Club” and think fancy ladies and the country club. And it is true that for most of the 60 years of the Susquehanna Garden Club, we did meet at the country club. But our purpose and our activities are those which all gardening lovers enjoy. Our recent survey found that what our members enjoy most, besides working in our community gardens, is the friendships they have made, sharing about their gardens, and the knowledge they have gained. Our meetings include reports on horticulture, wildlife, birds, and butterflies. Each meeting we have a speaker on topics ranging from flower arranging to forestry to soil testing, etc. Our three civic gardens are: Shikellamy Marina Garden; the landscape flowers at Jack Treas Park, Shamokin Dam; and a natural garden in the Anthony Selins Park, Selinsgrove. Another fun activity is the programs that we hold for youth at the Degenstein Library in Sunbury. The kids, and parents too, enjoy planting seeds, learning about bees, insects, and nature. We are very proud of the yearly scholarships we provide for two graduating students from Shikellamy and Selinsgrove High Schools who are going into horticulture related fields – recently biology and environmental science.



Photo by Diane Lengle

If you would like to learn about the Susquehanna Garden Club or join us in an activity, you are invited to any program we are having at our meetings. We meet on the third Thursday of the month Sept thru Dec and Jan thru June. The programs start at 1pm, and recently we have been meeting at Front Street Station in Northumberland. Our May meeting will be soil testing preparation and June will be a summer fun project held at Jack Treas Park. Our meeting information is in the *Daily Item* and on our [Facebook page](#). We take the summer off from meetings but are hard at work keeping our gardens beautiful. And – this invite is for men too. We don’t want to be just lovely ladies!

*Diane Lengle has been a member of the Susquehanna Garden Club for ten years and currently serves as President. She also is part of the group that maintains the club's garden at the Anthony Selins Park in Selinsgrove.*

**Don't forget!**

Bring the entire family to  
“Joy to the Earth”

April 20 @ East Snyder Park

Look for ESCG Gardener, Jackie Lambert who will be there offering gardening advice for adults and seed planting for kids. She'll also bring a few carnivorous plants to wow the crowd!

You don't want to miss this annual Earth Day event sponsored by [Susquehanna Valley Citizens Climate Lobby](#) More details about “Joy to the Earth” can be found on [page 8](#).

Hello Fellow Gardeners! Welcome to the 2024 growing season.

Looking forward to seeing you at the garden in your plot and/or at one of the many events.

Happy growing!

Crystal, ESCG President



# Kids' Page

## Chickweed

One of the first weeds to emerge in the spring is chickweed (*Stellaria media*). When you're helping in the garden, look for this bright green plant with tiny white flowers. You may find it at home too in your yard or along sidewalks.



Chickweed's genus name *Stellaria* comes from the Latin for "star" and refers to the tiny white, star-shaped flowers. The flowers have 5 white petals so deeply indented that they appear as 10 petals.

Even though many people consider chickweed a nuisance, it is a super plant! Chickweed is rich in Vitamins A and C, as well as calcium, fiber, and other minerals. It is also delicious! The plant leaves have soothing qualities that help reduce inflammation and relieve bug bites and stings.

Here's a [coloring page](#) created by [Learning Herbs](#) to help you identify chickweed.

If you want to learn more about chickweed and other helpful plants that grow in your yard or at the garden, ask your parents to visit Learning Herbs website. There you can learn about [Herb Fairies](#), an herbal "learning system" for kids.



The inner stem of chickweed is elastic, so if you gently pull the stem apart, the outer sheath will separate while the inner part will stretch.

Thank you, Herb Fairies for these [chickweed activities](#) too!



Pepper seedlings by Jackie Lambert

We invite you to share your wisdom, photos, stories, or creative writing.  
Please email newsletter submissions to:  
[escgpanews@gmail.com](mailto:escgpanews@gmail.com)



Killdeer eggs by Arden Miller

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Iris by Arden Miller

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